



Recruiter

The Magazine of the Air Force Recruiting Professional

**Blue
Suit**
XXIV

November
2003

September Top EA Recruiters

TSgt Tony Hall	361	700%
MSgt Marco O'Brien	311	600%
SSgt George Blackwelder Jr.	313	600%
SSgt Scott Hitchcock	313	600%
MSgt Darryck Farmer	318	600%
SSgt David Demeter	343	514%
SSgt Christopher Porras	361	500%
TSgt Steven Swingle	367	500%
SSgt Jason McAlister	367	500%
SSgt Christopher Hodo	368	500%

September Top Flight Chiefs

MSgt Daniel Dostart	343E	275%
MSgt Louis Despres	342G	257%
TSgt David Desmarais	349F	211%
MSgt Gary Evans	331E	200%
MSgt Michael Dorombozo	368A	192%
MSgt Michael Kromoff	362G	190%
MSgt Ronald Francis	330B	190%
TSgt Joseph Merrill	319D	189%
TSgt Ronald Orr	313F	188%
MSgt James Perras	313D	186%

Top FY03 OA Producing Squadrons

Physician			Nurse			Dental		
367 RCS	200%	341 RCS	100%	337 RCS	200%	333 RCS	350%	
331 RCS	150%	344 RCS	100%	338 RCS	157%	338 RCS	200%	
313 RCS	100%	345 RCS	100%	333 RCS	150%	339 RCS	200%	
332 RCS	100%	364 RCS	100%	348 RCS	150%	314 RCS	167%	
337 RCS	100%			331 RCS	138%	364 RCS	167%	
				345 RCS	125%	330 RCS	150%	
				361 RCS	125%	341 RCS	150%	

Recruiter Spotlight

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Paula Allen-Gibbs



Staff Sgt. Mark E. Wildes

Job title: Enlisted accessions recruiter, 338th Recruiting Squadron

Office location: Huber Heights, Ohio

Prior career field: Supply

Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pa.

Time in Air Force: 10 years

Time in AFRS: Six years

Hobbies: Basketball, softball and watching football on television

What inspires you to do what you do? The satisfaction of knowing I'm helping young men and women establish a career that will help them for the rest of their life

What are your career goals? To make technical sergeant, finish my bachelor's degree and possibly pursue a master's degree before retirement

What is the best advice you have ever received? Find the good in all situations, especially the bad ones

Personal motto: Life is too short to pursue anything less than passion



November 2003 Vol. 49 No. 11

Editorial staff

Commander

Brig. Gen. Edward A. Rice Jr.

Chief, Public Affairs

Lt. Col. R. Steven Murray

Superintendent, Public Affairs

Senior Master Sgt. Linda Brandon

Editor

Staff Sgt. John Asselin

This funded Air Force magazine is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the *Recruiter* are not necessarily the official view of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force.

The editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs Office of Air Force Recruiting Service, Randolph AFB, Texas. All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

Articles and photos submitted for publication in the *Recruiter* must be received by the editor no later than the first day of the month preceding publication.

Correspondence should be addressed to AFRS/PA, 550 D STREET WEST STE 1, ATTN: EDITOR, RANDOLPH AFB, TX 78150-4527. Phone numbers are Commercial (210) 652-5745, DSN 487-5745 or e-mail afrshqpa@rs.af.mil

cover photo



Staff Sgt. Richard Blankenship, 332nd Recruiting Squadron, Master Sgt. Gregory Richmond, 332nd RCS, and Staff Sgt. David Demeter, 343rd RCS, stand at attention during a Basic Military Training graduation parade. Sergeants Blankenship, Richmond and Demeter were three of the top 12 recruiters named during Operation Blue Suit XXV. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Tony Leverett

Blue Suit XXV

Recruiting recognizes its best

**By Brig. Gen. Edward A. Rice Jr.
Air Force Recruiting Service
commander**

Each year, Air Force Recruiting Service holds Operation Blue Suit; a week-long event in San Antonio celebrating recruiting's best-of-the-best. This year was no different as AFRS had the honor of recognizing 12 of our finest recruiters, and their spouses, during Operation Blue Suit XXV in October.

These 12 outstanding recruiters distinguished themselves by stepping beyond a pace set by an already outstanding team. Their combined efforts put 411 new airmen and 53 health professionals in Air Force uniforms during fiscal 2003.

Throughout this issue you will read about our Blue Suiters and how they reached the pinnacle of recruiting success. They have important tips – some are their own ideas, and some they learned from their predecessors. They have met many

“These 12 outstanding recruiters distinguished themselves by stepping beyond a pace set by an already outstanding team.”



challenges head on. They know what works and what doesn't – they hold the keys to success. Pay close attention to what they say – their stories can help anyone in AFRS.

We also recognize the efforts of their spouses.

It's no secret that spouses play an important role in the Air Force, especially in recruiting. Ask any of our Blue Suiters and I'm sure they'll tell you their spouses are critical to our mission. Many provide more than support at home – they work together as a team. Some go on family visits, make prospect calls and much more.

Please join me in congratulating and thanking this year's Blue Suiters and their spouses.





Blue Suit Master Sgts. Gary Mowry, 340th Recruiting Squadron, left, and Gregory Richmond, 332nd RCS, talk with basic trainees over lunch during Operation Blue Suit XXV.

Recruiters overcome challenges, earn 25th annual Blue Suit award

By Staff Sgt. Marti Ribeiro
Air Force Recruiting Service

The Blue Suit award winners and their spouses were recently flown into San Antonio for a week of fun and relaxation.

The top 12 recruiters in Air Force Recruiting Service for the fiscal year earned the Blue Suit award. The award includes a trip for the recruiter and their spouse to San Antonio, where the recruiter and spouses are formally recognized and enjoy a week of AFRS-sponsored activities.

For some the award is sometimes viewed as a long-overdue recognition for the job they do. None of these recruiters are stationed in Hometown, U.S.A., where patriotism soars and qualified applicants flock to the recruiters' offices. These award winners have had to overcome the challenges associated with anti-military communities, Amish

country, high-income areas where most students go on to college and staunch liberal ideals, where there may be aggressive opposition against the military.

None of the "dirty dozen," as they like to call themselves, have had a "cake walk" this past year. Putting in an average of 50-60 hours a week, the recruiters have had to adopt critical time management skills to get the job done.

"I don't have normal hours because I'm a doctor recruiter," said Staff Sgt. Jason Tag, 344th Recruiting Squadron. "Most of my prospective applicants are professional physicians who are on-call much of the day. The only time they have to meet with me is for dinner engagements."

Tech. Sgt. Ace Apodaca, an officer accessions recruiter from the 367th RCS, shares the same challenge. "I meet a lot of my applicants on the weekend, because that's when they're available." According to Sergeant Apodaca, he even met a doctor

on Father's Day because that's the only time he was able to talk.

Besides the time obstacles these recruiters have encountered, their recruiting zones have provided a multitude of challenges throughout fiscal 2003.

"I recruit in a predominately farm community," said Staff Sgt. David Demeter, a 343rd RCS enlisted accessions recruiter. "They are very pro-military, but at the same time, most stick to the tradition of passing down the farm to family members – which doesn't leave me with a large pool of willing applicants."

The enlisted accessions recruiter from the 368th RCS in Utah, Tech Sgt. Scott Wealton, also has a different challenge. "I recruit in a very Mormon area, and since most graduate high school and move on to completing their religious mission for the next two years, I don't have much of a high school market." According to Sergeant Wealton, he has more of an "after high school" market, because that's when the majority of his applicant pool is willing to join.

Staff Sgt. William Malcolm, an enlisted accessions recruiter with the 313th RCS, faces a different challenge in his recruiting zone – high-income families.

"I recruit in an area where the high school seniors are driving nicer cars than the school teachers," Sergeant Malcolm explained. "It's typically very high-income and most students continue on to college." According to Sergeant Malcolm, it's a challenge but one he overcame to earn this award.

One Blue Suit winner's challenging year sticks out in the minds of many at AFRS. Tech Sgt. Chris Williams, a 364th RCS enlisted accessions recruiter, walked into a recruiting office that had been closed for five years in San Francisco.

Sergeant Williams has faced an uphill battle in a community widely characterized by the media as liberal and known for its opposition of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

"Did you see the protesters during the war outside a recruiter's office?" she asked. "Well, that was my office."

Her solution to the challenge – volunteer as much as possible. "I volunteer for just about everything in the community – it gives the city the chance to get to know me and trust me," Sergeant Williams said.

In addition to overcoming time constraints and challenging recruiting zones, these Blue Suit award winners have demonstrated they know how to balance work and family life.

"It's hard, but you can do it," Sergeant Demeter said. "Most week nights I go home around 6 p.m. and spend some time with my family. After my kids go to bed, I return to the office to finish up."

Sergeant Wealton has even gone as far as to take his family along with him to events. "They enjoy it, and it gives me a little extra time to spend with them."

While some Blue Suiters don't have any children, quality time with spouses is critical and some have become creative in finding time to spend with each other. Staff Sgt. Jason Maloney, 318th RCS, enlisted accessions recruiter, and his wife, Amy, have created "Amy Days." These days are set aside for them to spend the entire day together shopping, going to the movies and eating at restaurants.

"Having quality time together makes it easier during the week when we can't see each other as much," Sergeant Maloney said.

But even with all of their hard work, the general consensus among this "dirty dozen" is that they couldn't do it alone. Without the help of flight chiefs, trainers and support staff, these Blue Suiters wouldn't have made it to San Antonio.

2003 Blue Suit Winners

Tech. Sgt. Bruno Pell, 311th RCS
Staff Sgt. William Malcolm, 313th RCS
Staff Sgt. Jason Maloney, 318th RCS
Staff Sgt. Shawn Branum, 330th RCS
Master Sgt. Gregory Richmond, 332nd RCS
Staff Sgt. Richard Blankenship Jr., 332nd RCS
Staff Sgt. David Demeter, 343rd RCS
Staff Sgt. Jason Tag, 344th RCS
Master Sgt. Gary Mowry, 349th RCS
Tech. Sgt. Chris Williams, 364th RCS
Tech. Sgt. Ace Apodaca, 367th RCS
Tech. Sgt. Scott Wealton, 368th RCS

BLUE SUIT WINNERS



Tech. Sgt. Bruno Pell III
311th RCS

Officer Accessions

Hometown: Cleveland, Ohio

Time in Air Force: 15 years

Time in AFRS: Five years

Personal motto: Never say never

Inspiration: My family, colleagues and team members

Hobbies: Golf, wood working and home improvement

Why be a recruiter?

Officer accessions is by far the most fun and most rewarding job in the Air Force.

Personal goals: To be the best role model that I can be for my children

Career goals: To become a flight chief and possibly make chief master sergeant

Recruiting tips: Always be in control, keep it simple and have fun

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Work ethic, dedication and integrity

Best advice ever received: Never let them see you sweat



Staff Sgt. William Malcolm
313th RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: Cheektowaga, N.Y.

Time in Air Force: 12 years

Time in AFRS: Three years

Personal motto: If you are early, you are on time, if you are on time, you're late, and if you're late, you're in trouble

Inspiration: To give 100 percent in all I do

Hobbies: Golf and softball

Why be a recruiter? I have such a deep love for the Air Force and I want others to enjoy the same benefits I have

Personal goals: Help my family attain their goals and be the best husband and "Dada" I can be

Career goals: Continue my education and become the chief master sergeant of the Air Force someday

Recruiting tips: Be yourself; leave everyone on a good note; have fun; plan your work and work your plan; integrity first

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Service before self, having a supportive wife, being organized and prepared, and having outstanding leadership at the command level and top-notch supervision

Best advice ever received: If you want to get there faster, leave earlier



Staff Sgt. Jason Maloney
318th RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: Granite City, Ill.

Time in Air Force: Seven years

Time in AFRS: Two years, nine months

Personal motto: Don't tell me what you can't do, tell me what you can do

Inspiration: My wife, Amy, and my flight chief

Hobbies: Paintball and softball

Why be a recruiter? For the challenge and to give others the same chances and opportunities I have

Personal goals: Get my degree and be the best husband I can be

Career goals: Make chief master sergeant

Recruiting tips: Believe in what you sell, be confident and take the extra time and earn the applicant's trust -- listen to other recruiters and find out what works for them

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Dedication, drive, support from your spouse and a belief in what you are selling

Best advice ever received? When you think you've tried hard enough, try harder and don't ever give up



Staff Sgt. Shawn Branum
330th RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: Columbus, Ind.

Time in Air Force: 10 years

Time in AFRS: Two years, six months

Personal motto: Failure is not an option

Inspiration: My family

Hobbies: Golf and watching NASCAR

Why be a recruiter? To give quality men and women the same opportunities the Air Force gave me

Personal goals: Make technical sergeant, win a gold badge and finish my degree

Career goals: Make chief master sergeant and become a recruiting squadron superintendent

Recruiting tips: Practice time management and use all of your recruiting tools all of the time

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Determination, 100 percent family support, hard work and 100 percent squadron support

Best advice ever received: Attitude reflects leadership



Master Sgt.
Gregory Richmond
332nd RCS

Officer Accessions

Hometown: West

Carrollton, Ohio

Time in Air Force: 21 years, six months

Time in AFRS: Five years, 10 months

Personal motto: Do the best you can

Inspiration: My family

Hobbies: Spending time with my family, golf and working out

Why be a recruiter? To give back to the Air Force and be able to positively impact applicants' lives

Personal goals: Complete my bachelor's degree, spend time with my family and watch my children grow into productive adults

Career goals: Make senior master sergeant and become a flight chief

Recruiting tips: Have fun and always be positive

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Dedication, hard work and positive leadership

Best advice ever received: Always remember no matter how high you climb, you had to start at the bottom first



Staff Sgt.
Richard Blankenship
332nd RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: Savannah, Ga.

Time in Air Force: 10 years

Time in AFRS: Two years, four months

Personal motto: Live life to its fullest

Inspiration: My family

Hobbies: Softball and quality time with my son

Why be a recruiter? To give back to the Air Force what it has given to me

Personal goals: Finish my bachelor's degree

Career goals: Become a chief master sergeant

Recruiting tips: Know your product, believe in it and sell it

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Hard work and dedication

Best advice ever received: What lies before us and what lies behind us are only matters of time, compared to what lies within us

BLUE SUIT WINNERS



**Staff Sgt. David
Demeter**

343rd RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: North Judson, Ind.

Time in Air Force: Eight years

Time in AFRS: Two years, five months

Personal motto: Life is too short

Inspiration: My wife and children

Hobbies: Softball and golf

Why be a recruiter: It is very rewarding and truly is the best job in the Air Force

Personal goals: Keep my family priority one, finish my degree and work on my golf swing as much as possible

Career goals: Become a chief master sergeant

Recruiting tips: Believe in the Air Force, have fun and sell yourself

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Dedication, hard work, a wife who wants you to succeed and great squadron support

Best advice ever received: Have fun when you recruit



Staff Sgt. Jason Tag
344th RCS

Officer Accessions

Hometown: Dallas, Texas

Time in Air Force: 12 years

Time in AFRS: Four years, six months

Personal motto: There is no such thing as a stupid question

Inspiration: My wife and daughter

Hobbies: Music, computers and being a father

Why be a recruiter? Because it allows you to take control of your career, with your own initiative and work ethic

Personal goals: Finish my bachelor's degree

Career goals: Make technical sergeant and retire with a proud career

Recruiting tips: Treat every recruit the same way you would like to be treated; it is all about support

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Do your job to the best of your ability and don't try to work to win awards; it will come to you

Best advice ever received: Follow your passion for life and don't make excuses



Master Sgt. Gary Mowry
349th RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: Fort Smith, Ark.

Time in Air Force: 16 years, six months

Time in AFRS: One year, seven months

Personal motto: If you say you can't, you won't

Inspiration: My wife, children and first flight chief

Hobbies: Hunting and fishing

Why be a recruiter?

Gives people a great opportunity to get a great start on life and a great career

Personal goals: Complete my bachelor's degree

Career goals: Retire as a chief master sergeant

Recruiting tips: Perpetuate from everyone and really listen

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Hard work and dedication

Best advice ever received: Work smarter, not harder



Tech. Sgt. Chris Williams
364th RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: Savannah, Ga.

Time in Air Force: 16 years

Time in AFRS: Four years

Personal motto: Strive for perfection, settle for excellence

Inspiration: Work for eternal values

Hobbies: Watching the latest and greatest DVD movies with my daughters

Why be a recruiter? To give back to the leaders of tomorrow

Personal goals: To be the perfect role model for my daughters

Career goals: Continue to serve my country in any capacity I am needed

Recruiting tips: Know your product, believe in your product and sell with enthusiasm

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Being aware of who you are and what is your vision, mission and passion

Best advice ever received: Success is not to be measured so much by the statue one has attained in life, but rather by the obstacles one has overcome while trying to succeed



Tech. Sgt. Ace Apodaca
367th RCS

Officer Accessions

Hometown: Raton, N.M.

Time in Air Force: 19 years

Time in AFRS: 10 years

Personal motto: You can't do it all alone

Inspiration: My wife and two children and my deceased father

Hobbies: Sports, fitness, coaching youth sports and weight lifting

Why be a recruiter? To directly impact peoples' lives and bring quality people in the Air Force

Personal goals: To raise my two boys to be responsible adults and set myself up for a rewarding career after the Air Force

Career goals: Continue to make rank all the way up and make a difference to somebody

Recruiting tips: Be real and sincere

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Love of your product, dedication and do whatever it takes to get the job done -- support from a lot of Air Force servicemembers and a great flight chief and flight commander

Best advice ever received: Before you do something, know the consequences involved; think things through



Tech. Sgt. Scott Wealton
368th RCS

Enlisted Accessions

Hometown: Marquette, Mich.

Time in Air Force: 14 years

Time in AFRS: Two years

Personal motto: Be the change you wish to see in the world

Hobbies: Motorcycles and computers

Why be a recruiter? To have a positive impact on the lives of young people

Personal goals: Spend more time with my family

Career goals: Become a flight chief and retire with more than 20 years service

Recruiting tips: Be honest, be yourself and work hard

What makes a Blue Suit winner? Take a personal interest in the success of each applicant; treat them like you would want to be treated

Best advice ever received: Do your best, and the rest will take care of itself

Blue Suit spouses play important role in recruiting

By Tech. Sgt. Daniel Elkins
Air Force Recruiting Service

Nowhere is it perhaps more evident than in Air Force recruiting that the everyday stresses of duty extend beyond the office and have a profound bearing on the families of those charged with meeting this mission. The oft

demands of 12- to 16-hour days and weekends away working special events are increasingly compounded by a geographic separation no longer affording these families the network of support that comes from living on or near an Air Force base.

Recognizing the sacrifices spouses are asked to make on behalf of recruiting duty is the chief reason for ensuring they are duly honored as contributing to the success of their husbands and wives who have earned the Air Force Recruiting Service Blue Suit award. The

award is presented to the top three recruiters in each of four recruiting groups and includes a week of formal recognition, cross feed with AFRS senior leadership and a couple days of leisure and entertainment for both military members and their spouses.

The acknowledgment of a spouse's role to the recruiting mission is underscored from the

inception of a military member's decision to become a recruiter. Recruiter screening teams always encourage spouses to be involved from the onset so they understand the inherent challenges involved in a decision to join recruiting. This,

according to spouses of several Blue Suit winners, is necessary for making goal.

"Recruiters must have the support of the spouse in order to be successful," said California native Janet Branum, who admits that she and her husband, Staff

Sgt. Shawn Branum, struggled through the first year of recruiting. "They have to know everything is okay on the home front so they can concentrate on their mission to put qualified people in the Air Force."

After their first year in Fort Wayne, Ind., they worked out a schedule conducive to both as well as their 4-year-old daughter, Alyssa, which includes "family night at the office two nights a week."

It is the flexibility of coordinating schedules with her husband, Tech. Sgt. Ace Apodaca, that Andrea Apodaca has grown to master after 11 years in recruiting. "As long as he wants to stay in recruiting, I'm willing to make the sacrifices needed to help his career," said the full-time nursing student and mother of Cameron, 12, and Anthony, 9.

Recruiters agree that one of the keys to success in recruiting is involvement. Although most spouses of Blue Suit award winners may downplay their role in recruiting, such modesty is frequently a sign of remarkable support.

"Spouses should get involved in office functions to better understand the requirements set by recruiting," said LaDanna Mowry, wife of Fort Smith, Ark.,

"You have to stay positive and be proactive by contacting other spouses in your area for support and advice on everything from TRICARE to dealing with living away from a base."

- Molly Malcolm

recruiter Master Sgt. Gary Mowry. Having elected to stay out of the workforce to be there for her husband and children, Cody, 14, and Hannah, 3, she firmly believes that this success is a result of support both at work and home. For Mrs. Mowry, building a network of support is critical, as many spouses must overcome the challenge of being remotely assigned.

“You have to stay positive and be proactive by contacting other spouses in your area for support and advice on everything from TRICARE to dealing with living away from a base,” said Molly Malcolm of Cheektowaga, N.Y., who faced a similar obstacle. She regularly coordinates holiday and summer parties for her husband, Staff Sgt. William Malcolm who recruits from nearby Tonowanda, and others in his flight in an effort to bring all their families closer together.

Another key to success is taking care of the people. Robert Williams, a former Air Force security forces member, draws parallels between his job as a realtor and that of his wife, Tech. Sgt. Chris Williams, who recruits in San Francisco. “Chris likes people and believes in taking care of them – it takes dedication and strength,” the 11-year veteran said of the young men and women she recruited to earn the award. “It’s important to always be there for your clients.”

Joanna Pell agrees that for her husband, Tech. Sgt. Bruno Pell, to be named a Blue Suit recruiter,

Photo by Staff Sgt. Marti Ribeiro



Amy Maloney, wife of Staff Sgt. Jason Maloney, receives a pedicure at the Aramesh Day Spa. The spouses were treated to a day at the spa during Operation Blue Suit.

it takes “hard work, dedication and always striving to be committed to his clients.” She said the change experienced from having been stationed in Florida for 10 years and then moving to the recruiting station at Middleburg Heights, Ohio, was dramatic, but after having been in recruiting for five years she has developed a greater understanding.

“(Recruiters) are under a great deal of pressure to succeed and need to come home and wind down. Home needs to be their haven,” Mrs. Pell said. “I know it is hard to do everything alone, but the more time a spouse (participates) the easier it gets.”

Such consideration is essential, admits Brandy Tag. Whether it’s a long day at the Arlington, Texas, recruiting office or another missed

school event for 5-year-old Molly, Staff Sgt. Jason Tag relies upon her to minimize the impact of his absence.

“We are a team,” insisted Mrs. Tag. “I offer the support he needs to achieve his goals; some days it’s an ear, others it’s running errands.”

It’s the efforts by Mrs. Tag and other spouses that AFRS leaders honor as part of Blue Suit.

“Blue Suit is amazing and more than I ever expected. Nothing prepares you for the star treatment you get and having the first sergeant carry your luggage,” added Mrs. Malcolm, who believes more individuals are deserving of such recognition. “It’s a great program, but it recognizes the smallest minority of all of the recruiters out there working so hard.”



Brig. Gen. Tom Deppe, formerly a staff sergeant, was a recruiter from March 1974 to August 1977.

Former Air Force recruiter becomes one-star general

By G.W. Pomeroy
Air Force Surgeon General
Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Tom Deppe would be the first person to tell you that he – a former enlisted person who served three and one half years as an Air Force recruiter – is by no means unique in terms of working his way up the ranks from airman basic to brigadier general.

To bolster this point, he would tell you that he wasn't even unique in his recent Senior Leadership Orientation Course, also known as general officer charm school. At least two other classmates had served as many years, more than 10, in the enlisted ranks.

This lack of uniqueness simply supports his view that even in an era of cutbacks, outsourcing, transformation and other Beltway buzzwords, he has thrived, survived and excelled because he believes the Air Force is – and has been

since he entered Basic Military Training in July 1967 – a fertile land of opportunity.

“If you are willing to be flexible and work hard, anything can happen,” said General Deppe, a St. Louis native who served as an Air Force recruiter from March 1974 to August 1977.

It was sentiment of this sort that Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, expressed Aug. 7 when he served as host for General Deppe's promotion ceremony at the National Military Command Center in the Pentagon.

“Someone asked me recently how long I knew I wanted to become the chairman,” General Myers said, slightly amused that someone would even ask such a question.

“It's not something you can plan on; there's no cookie-cutter roadmap to success in one's career,” General Myers told the roughly 250 people who attended

the ceremony.

And then, pointing to General Deppe, he said, “I give you Exhibit A.”

General Deppe serves as the deputy director for operations on the National Military Command Center's Operations Team Two, on the Joint Staff at the Pentagon. During his 36-year trek from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, to the Pentagon he has served in various wing and headquarters-level positions in ICBM, space and maintenance operations.

He commanded a Ground Launched Cruise Missile flight in NATO; a Minuteman II maintenance squadron in Air Combat Command; an ICBM logistics group; a Minuteman III missile wing in Air Force Space Command; and was vice commander of a space launch wing.

He is a master missileer in both operations and maintenance. His expertise also includes systems ranging from Hound Dog, Quail and SRAM to Minuteman II and III, Peacekeeper, Atlas III, Delta II and III, and Titan IV. Not counting professional military education schools – a roster that ranges from NCO Leadership School to Air War College – General Deppe and his wife (high school sweetheart Eileen) have served in 18 assignments.

General Deppe volunteered to become a recruiter, as a six-year total-service staff sergeant, as the result of an Air Force Times story that exalted \$150 per month proficiency pay in the post-Vietnam, newborn all-volunteer force. His first recruiting assignment was to the Air Force recruiting office

in Springfield, Ill. The same office, he recalls fondly, where Stella Fairweather Peecher is still the office secretary today.

In 1975, the recruiting service reorganized nationwide and the Missouri-Illinois area was split by the Mississippi River. Missouri-side offices became part of the Denver-based recruiting group, and Illinois-side offices became part of the Indianapolis recruiting group; however the Illinois recruits still needed to use the Military Entrance Processing Station in St. Louis.

As a very successful recruiter in Springfield his first year, General Deppe was given the MEPS counselor job in his hometown. Missing the autonomy and challenges of “carrying the bag,” General Deppe volunteered to go back to the field as a front-line recruiter in North St. Louis County after a year in the MEPS.

This former wing commander said that the most personally challenging and personally rewarding job he ever had was his duty as an Air Force recruiter. That’s saying a lot considering that — under his command — the 341st Space Wing at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., in 2002 won the Verne Orr Award, which is presented annually to the unit that most effectively uses its human resources to accomplish its mission.

“If you are motivated by achievement and goals, then recruiting is one of the few places where your efforts, and only your efforts, directly reflect your success,” he said, emphatically. “Sixteen hours days, sometimes seven-day workweeks, whatever it takes to get the job done. Oh, and

Courtesy photo



Brig. Gen. Tom Deppe is congratulated by Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, while his wife, Eileen, pins on his first star.

don’t let me forget, a great, understanding wife.”

While on recruiting duty in Florissant, Mo., General Deppe attended college classes two nights a week, which allowed him to finish the bachelor’s degree that he had started before enlisting.

The general credited his recruiting duty as a “life-changing experience” that factored heavily in his success as an officer.

“It strengthened my communicative skills and motivated me to take advantage of benefits that I preached about. I still believe that if the Air Force can take a kid from the inner-city streets of St. Louis like me and make a general out of him, it can offer the same opportunity for everyone ... they just need to know about it.”

In his command assignments in Florida and Montana, he was well known to the recruiters in the area because he attended their events, spoke at their conferences, and always visited their offices — no notice — to say hello and see if there was anything he can do to

help.

“Nobody appreciates the fine line between supporting the local recruiter and being a nuisance like a former recruiter does. I really liked the autonomy of the business and I am very sensitive to make sure I don’t destroy it for the local guy.”

That same concern for everyone, no matter how big or small, has been the key to General Deppe’s success. At his promotion ceremony people from every one of the general’s previous assignments attended to show support.

As General Deppe said at his promotion ceremony: “The most important thing about the promotion is that the Air Force still has confidence in me and wants me to stay around a while longer doing what I love to do.”

FOOTNOTE: Mr. Pomeroy, a retired Air Force master sergeant, works in public affairs for the Air Force Surgeon General in Washington. In 1976, General Deppe recruited him into the Air Force.

TAKE NOTE

Air Force Climate Survey

The 2003 Air Force Climate survey began Oct. 1 to help leaders determine organizational improvement.

The survey provides active duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian employees an opportunity to speak out about strengths and areas for improvement in their organization.

"It's critical for servicemembers to participate in the Air Force Climate Survey so key leaders know what's going on in the field," said Capt. Jodi Brown, AFRS contact for the AF Climate Survey. "It helps the chain of command locate where the Air Force needs improvements and reinforces our strengths."

The survey is available online at <http://afclimatesurvey.af.mil>, and participation by all Air Force members is critical to an accurate assessment. Participants can complete the survey anytime during the survey period, which runs through Nov. 23. The web address is not dot-mil restricted. The Air Force will release the results in early 2004.

IG complaints

The inspector general offers an appropriate venue to send complaints from customers. Send complaints to <http://afrecruiting.com/ig/>. The Web site lists points of contact and references Air Force Instructions to help with the complaint process.

Personnel, pay systems

A new Web-based system aims to integrate all military personnel and pay systems.

When fully implemented, the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System will provide "one-stop shopping" for servicemembers. The system will absorb the 79 systems into one Web-based system accessible to all who need to view those records, including the servicemembers themselves.

The Department of Veterans Affairs will use the records after the servicemember leaves the military.

Holiday cards

Free print holiday greetings are available to servicemembers worldwide through the Army and Air Force Hometown News Service.

The Internet-based program allows servicemembers to send holiday greetings to relatives.

Now in its fourth year, the program is open for submissions Oct. 1 through Nov. 25.

Program information and forms are accessible on Hometown Link at <http://hn.afnews.af.mil> from any government computer system.

Enlisted promotion tips

Officials at the Air Force Personnel Center offer several tips airmen should focus on to give themselves the best possible chance for promotion.

Officials advise airmen to start preparing for promotion early, not get lax on study habits, and ensure study materials are current.

To learn more about how to be successful in the Weighted Airmen Promotion System, visit <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/pubaffairs/release/2003/09/EnlPromo.htm>.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael O'Connor



Talk to me

Ricky Rudd, driver of the No. 21 Motorcraft Air Force Ford Taurus, talks with Charlie Sherman, WMUR-TV sports director, about the new track conditions at Loudon International Speedway during "Race Fever" in Concord, N.H., as WMUR-TV videographer Phil Tetreault covers the interview for the evening news. Mr. Rudd spent two hours with recruiters signing more than 400 pieces of memorabilia for fans out of the the 319th Recruiting Squadron RAPTOR platform.

October Promotions

Major

Maria Vida 317 RCS

Senior Master Sergeant

Scott Haskins 369 RCG

Gary Porter 369 RCG

Master Sergeant

Lynda Beck HQ AFRS

Gary Quesenberry HQ AFRS

David Heberle 313 RCS

Douglas Branham II 331 RCS

Barry Gorniak 332 RCS

Gwendolyn Kyles 336 RCS

Denise Slaughter 336 RCS

John Wellman 338 RCS

Mark Wynn 338 RCS

John Thornton 347 RCS

Tony Hall 361 RCS

Raul Sanchez III 361 RCS

Rommel Boo 362 RCS

Michael Vaneck 362 RCS

William Fawcett 364 RCS

Technical Sergeant

Scott Ploetz HQ AFRS

Domic Devito 318 RCS

Bryan McClary 318 RCS

Bridget Hurlbut 319 RCS

Brett Dew 330 RCS

Douglas June 332 RCS

Matthew Solomon 332 RCS

Steven Thomas II 332 RCS

Clifton Williams IV 333 RCS

Carmellea Abercrombie 339 RCS

Raynard Jokie 339 RCS

Randy Kania 339 RCS

Darren Briggs 341 RCS

Scott Macintosh 342 RCS

Christopher Van Tine 343 RCS

Robert Archuleta 344 RCS

Deskridge Scott 347 RCS

Parrish Hollingsworth 349 RCS

Conrad Koerner 349 RCS

Jennifer Jones 361 RCS

Gary Shaw 361 RCS

Michael Shumate Jr. 331 RCS

Staff Sergeant

Joshua Davis 331 RCS

Recruiting Schoolhouse Graduates Class 03025

Senior Airman Veronica Billings

Senior Airman Jill Carr

Tech. Sgt. Timothy Coleman

Staff Sgt. Corey Denney

Staff Sgt. David Fullam

Staff Sgt. William Johnson

Staff Sgt. Howard Lorenz

Tech. Sgt. Raymond Nunez

Senior Airman Brian Paul

Senior Airman Robert Payne

Senior Airman Christopher Stewart

Staff Sgt. Lance Ward

Tech. Sgt. Shawn Webber

Staff Sgt. Bradley Wilson

AFRS/PA
550 D Street West Ste 1
Randolph AFB TX 78150-4527

PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
LAS VEGAS NV
PERMIT #583

**BEFORE HE WAS THE MAN IN BLACK.
HE WAS THE MAN IN BLUE.**



We proudly remember and salute Staff Sergeant John R. Cash.

Photo courtesy of the Cash family